



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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**IMMIGRATION LAWYER SENTENCED TO 2 YEARS IN PRISON
FOR CONSPIRING TO SUBMIT FALSE GREEN CARD
APPLICATIONS BASED ON SHAM MARRIAGES**

LEV L. DASSIN, the Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that IHAB TARTIR, 35, an immigration lawyer based in Brooklyn, New York, was sentenced today to 24 months in prison for conspiring to defraud the United States Department of Homeland Security by helping others obtain permanent resident cards, commonly known as "Green Cards," through sham marriages. The sentence was imposed this afternoon by United States District Judge GERARD E. LYNCH in Manhattan federal court. TARTIR was convicted on October 14, 2008 after a six-day trial before Judge LYNCH. According to documents filed in the case and the evidence at trial:

From 2002 to 2004, and again from December 2006 to September 2007, TARTIR agreed to submit false Green Card applications based on sham marriages to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. TARTIR paid kickbacks to a broker who arranged sham marriages between non-citizens seeking Green Cards and United States citizens willing to enter into sham marriages for money. In return, the broker referred sham marriage clients to TARTIR, who charged them fees to submit false Green card applications to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. TARTIR met repeatedly with individuals who had entered into, or agreed to enter into, sham marriages, and he used his skill and training as an immigration lawyer to advise them how to trick the immigration authorities into believing that the marriages were genuine.

In addition to the two-year prison term, TARTIR was sentenced to three years of supervised release and ordered to pay a fine of \$40,000. In sentencing TARTIR, Judge LYNCH stated that TARTIR was "at the heart of the scheme," and that TARTIR's role as a licensed attorney "brought an additional veneer of legitimacy to the conspiracy," adding that he acted "in cold blood for profit, without any excuse or mitigation."

Mr. DASSIN praised the work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the New York Office of the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in the investigation and prosecution of this case.

Assistant United States Attorneys DAVID B. MASSEY and NICOLE W. FRIEDLANDER are in charge of the prosecution.

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